

*American Junior Red Cross*

NEWS

DECEMBER • 1957



**DECEMBER NEWS THEME—  
WORKING FOR BETTER HUMAN RELATIONS**

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"American Junior Red Cross NEWS" is published monthly, October through May (except January), by American National Red Cross. Copyright 1957 by American National Red Cross, Washington, D. C.

Enrollment of elementary schools in the American Junior Red Cross includes a subscription to the NEWS on the basis of one copy for each classroom enrolled. Enrollment is for the calendar year. Enrollment fee is \$1.00 per room. For further information concerning enrollment and the Junior Red Cross program see your local Red Cross chapter. Individual subscriptions to the "American Junior Red Cross NEWS" are accepted at \$1.00 a year, 15 cents a single copy.

The NEWS was entered as second-class matter January 18, 1921, at the post office, Washington, D. C., under the Act of March 3, 1879. Acceptance for mailing at special rate of postage provided for in section 1103, Act of October 3, 1917, authorized January 3, 1921.

**EXPLORING OUR WORLD**

*Our Cover*

"Gifts of the Magi," our beautiful Christmas cover this month was made by Joseph Krush, well-known artist. Through its design and coloring, it brings to life the Biblical story of the visit of the wise men to the Christ Child: "and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh."

*Hanukkah*

For a story about the Jewish Feast of Lights, or Hanukkah, you will enjoy reading the one by Katherine Shippen on pages 10-12, "Judith Lights a Candle."

**EIGHT CANDLES**



Eight candles I shall light,  
On the Hanukkah Night.  
On that day, I shall pray  
In my own religious way.

SHEILA WITTENBERG  
Central Beach School  
Miami Beach, Fla.

*Gifts go to the Northland*

JRC gift boxes were given last year at Christmas to most of the children in Labrador, in Northern Greenland (the farthest north Eskimos), and in Iceland. Distribution was made through U. S. military personnel, using helicopters, air drops, snowmobiles, dog sleds, and snowshoes.

*Toys for Tots*

Sixth graders, Byhalia School, Byhalia (Marshall Co. chapter) Mississippi, painted and repaired toys, and dressed dolls for tots in their community who would otherwise not have had a happy Christmas. These same "eager beavers" also decorated 20 small trees for patients in isolation wards in the Memphis Naval Hospital. As one boy said: "It makes me feel so good to do something for somebody else."

—LOIS S. JOHNSON, editor.



*Photo by Fred Bauman*

## We believe in working for better human relations

*Riverside, California—Ernest Vasquez, an Indian student at Sherman Institute, presents stuffed animals his JRC members made for hospitalized children to Diana Paynter, Chemawa Junior High School, for distribution by her JRC committee at Christmas.*



# CHRISTMAS MISCHIEF



A story about Denmark by  
ELEANOR FRANCES LATTIMORE

*Illustrated by Ann Esbner*

**L**ONG BEFORE it was time for the Christmas elves to come, Helga and her sister Dagmar began to talk about them and to wonder what gifts they would bring this year. Helga and Dagmar did not talk about Santa Claus or Father Christmas. They lived in Denmark, where elves are the ones who bring presents to children at Christmas time.

Elves in all countries are said to be mischievous, and the elves of Denmark must enjoy playing tricks, for they bring both good and bad presents. They are fair, though, as Dagmar pointed out to Helga. The good gifts are for the children who have been good, while the worthless ones are for the naughty children.

"You mustn't be naughty this year, Helga," said Dagmar, who was older than her sister and much better behaved. "You mustn't pretend that Father's shoes are your own."

"I won't," said Helga, looking shocked. She would never, never do *that* again.

The Christmas elves do not expect to find gaily trimmed trees, nor do they expect to find empty stockings ready to be filled with toys. They expect—and find—shoes waiting for them, neatly paired. They know which shoes belong to each member of the family, and they fill the shoes with the kind of gifts they think each person deserves.

It was lucky for Helga that her mother had looked at the row of shoes last Christmas, before the elves had come to their house. She saw Dagmar's shoes set side by side, and little

Erik's shoes, but where Helga's shoes should have been was a great pair of boots, belonging to no one but Father! "Why did you put out Father's shoes, Helga?" asked Mother. "Because they are bigger than mine," Helga had replied.

"For shame!" said Mother. "The Christmas elves punish greedy children." She swiftly exchanged the pair of boots for Helga's own small shoes, and in the morning Helga found them filled with nuts and toys. They did not hold nearly as much as Father's big





boots, but Helga was lucky to find good things when she had been so greedy.

All through the year Helga had tried to be good. She had done her school work well, and she had minded her parents. As the family was not rich the children helped in their home, which was a pretty whitewashed house with a brown roof. Helga and Dagmar had certain tasks to do each day, some indoors and some outdoors. The outdoor tasks were the ones that Helga liked to do best. She liked to gather the new-laid eggs from the henhouse, and to feed the geese, who had a house all to themselves.

Before she went indoors to tidy her own room, or to learn to make neat darns in the toes of her stockings, Helga often wanted to explore the beechwood or run down the road to the harbor town. But, "Where are you going, Helga?" Dagmar would say. And, "Take me with you, Helga!" Erik would cry. There was no chance for Helga to put off doing her work. And, after all, she wanted to be good.

Now summer had passed; and the storks, who had built a nest on the chimney, spread their wide wings and flew toward the south. A wind came whipping in from the sea, tearing the leaves from the beech trees and making the clothes that Mother had washed, dance on the line. The two little girls had cheeks as rosy as polished apples, while Erik, in his red stocking cap, looked like a Christmas elf.

"Christmas is coming!" they cried. Now more than ever, Helga wanted to be good.

One day when Helga and Dagmar came home from school they found an old lady sitting beside the porcelain stove. Her white hair was pinned back in an old-fashioned knot, and her eyes peered keenly at the girls through steel-rimmed glasses. Helga had quite forgotten that her great-aunt Marthe was coming to spend Christmas with the family. She could not remember ever having seen her before, and her first thought was, Someone is sitting in Father's chair. For Father's chair was a special one, reserved for him.

"That is Father's chair," she said aloud.

"Sh-sh," whispered Dagmar. Then Dagmar went forward, saying, "How do you do, Aunt Marthe?" and made a curtsy as she shook hands with the old lady.

Helga curtsied, too, remembering her manners. But as she touched her great-aunt's hand she was aware of the questioning look in her eyes. She blushed with shame when Aunt Marthe said, "This must be Helga—

Helga and Dagmar were surprised to see Aunt Marthe sitting in Father's chair, talking to Erik.



the little girl who tried to fool the Christmas elves."

"Helga would never do such a thing again," said Dagmar, as Helga backed away from Aunt Marthe.

Aunt Marthe chuckled. But Helga still felt uncomfortable, for she did not like to be reminded of her old naughtiness.

Oh, how Helga wished that Aunt Marthe were not going to stay for Christmas! In the days that followed she tried her best to keep away from her. Aunt Marthe's voice was teasing, and her tongue was as sharp as her eyes. She seemed to know all the mischief that a child could get into: and it did not make Helga—or Dagmar, either—feel any better when Father cut her the best pieces of meat at the table, or when Mother talked to her instead of to them.

Only Erik, of the three children, seemed to like Aunt Marthe's company. He was a quiet little boy, too young to go to school, and as Mother said, "No trouble at all." Aunt Marthe, in turn, seemed to like Erik best. She told him stories while she knitted, and she did not scold him when he rolled her ball of yarn on the floor. She even smiled when he took off her glasses and tried them on the cat.

"Aunt Marthe is spoiling Erik," Dagmar said to Helga.

"Yes, I know," said Helga. "But Mother doesn't notice." Mother was too busy baking Christmas bread, and ironing clothes to be worn on Christmas Day. But the two little girls put their blonde, pigtailed heads together, and discussed the mischief that their brother was getting into. They alone knew that Erik had gone to fetch an egg for Aunt Marthe, and had somehow managed to break six eggs. And they alone knew that Erik had let out the geese, saying that they were storks and ought to fly away. The geese had flocked to the beechwood, and Dagmar and Helga had a very hard time capturing them.

#### FOOTSTEPS IN THE SNOW

Big feet, little feet in the snow.

Everybody hurrying while the wind does blow.

Footsteps making a crunch, crunch, crunch  
in the snow.

Long feet, short feet, wide feet, too.

While the church bells ring on Christmas Day,

While snowballs are flying and children play,

Footsteps making a crunch, crunch, crunch  
in the snow.

BOB MAY

Campus Laboratory School  
San Diego State College  
San Diego, Calif.

"The Christmas elves will punish you, Erik," warned Dagmar. "They will leave sticks and stones in your shoes instead of toys."

"I didn't mean to be naughty," said Erik.

"But you were naughty," said Helga.

"I never tried to fool the Christmas elves," said Erik.

Could she never forget about last Christmas? Helga wondered. Everyone, even Erik, kept reminding her. She was comforted, though, by the thought of how good she had been this year. The Christmas elves would know that. They always knew.

Two days before Christmas, Aunt Marthe lost her glasses. High and low they were searched for, by all the family. Father looked on the tops of shelves, Mother looked in her workbasket, and the three children, on hands and knees, searched every inch of the floor. Aunt Marthe could not look, though. Her eyes were dim, for she could hardly see without her glasses. Her hands lay idle in her lap, and she said, as if to herself, "Whoever hid my glasses is the one who will find them."

"I didn't hide Aunt Marthe's glasses, and I'm not going to look for them any more," Helga said to Dagmar. But when Helga went out through the snow to feed the geese, there were the glasses, hooked on the branch of an elderberry bush! They twinkled in the sun-

light like some bright ornament. "Oh!" cried Helga. And before she knew it, she had brought them into the house.

"Thank you for finding my glasses, Helga," said Aunt Marthe. There was a puzzled note in her voice, which Helga noticed.

"Oh, Helga!" cried Mother. "Aren't you sorry?" Mother looked distressed, and Helga noticed that, too.

"Well, at least the glasses were not broken," said Father.

On Christmas Eve the children set their shoes out in a row. The smallest pair were Erik's, the next smallest, Helga's. There were no boots this time. Oh no! "I'm too old for toys," said Father. But, though the children knew he was joking, his voice sounded sad.

When Mother kissed Helga goodnight, she said, "Promise to be good, next year."

"I promise," said Helga, and went to sleep in her soft feather bed. She knew what she wanted—a toy tea set and a new doll.

Perhaps Aunt Marthe knew, all along. But she never said a word. When morning came, she sat down in Father's chair by the stove, and waited for the children to come downstairs with their gifts. She guessed, from the scuffling noise overhead, that they had looked in their shoes, and she wondered who would be the first to come clattering down.

The first was Erik. He had a toy lamb clutched in one hand, and he was blowing a shiny tin horn. Then came Dagmar, who carried her shoes, one in each hand. One shoe was filled with toys, the other with nuts and candy.

Helga came last, and she was holding just one shoe. Someone—the elves surely—had put a tea set in it. But Helga's face was sad, and there were tears in her eyes. "Where is your other shoe, Helga?" asked Aunt Marthe, gently.

When Helga did not answer, Dagmar spoke for her. "Helga had sticks and stones in her other shoe," she said.

"That is true," said Mother, coming into the room with Father. She explained that the Christmas elves had filled only one of Helga's shoes with toys, because, although she had been good, she had been naughty, too." Please tell Aunt Marthe that you are sorry, Helga," she said.

"But I did not take Aunt Marthe's glasses," Helga protested.

"Who did then?" asked Mother.

Aunt Marthe looked at Erik. Erik looked at the floor. He was a very little boy, and perhaps he was too young for the elves to punish. "Sometimes the elves make a mistake," said Aunt Marthe. "See, Helga, here is a doll that they left with me—and you know I am much too old to play with dolls." Aunt Marthe drew the doll out from the depths of her knitting bag, and handed it to Helga.

The little girl and the old lady smiled at each other. "The Christmas elves *do* make mistakes, don't they?" said Helga. Her face shone with happiness as she hugged her doll. Aunt Marthe had righted the mistake, because Aunt Marthe knew that the one who had found her glasses was not the one who had hid them.

There was no need to say anything, for Mother looked at Helga with a sudden understanding in her eyes. And Father said, "It must have been Erik who was naughty. But even grown people make mistakes—just like the Christmas elves."

(THE END)





Earl F. Merrill photo

▲ TRAY MATS and decorations for VA and children's hospitals are completed by boys at Main Street School, West Springfield, Mass.

# Sugar Plum

"Visions of sugar plums" not only dance in the heads of JRC boys and girls, but are translated into all kinds of Christmas gift ideas to bring happiness to others. A few of these sugar plum ideas are pictured here.

CHRISTMAS BOOTS for patients at VA hospitals are decorated by silk screen process, by Peggy Tucker, Springdale School, and John Lamkin, Lakeview School, Birmingham, Ala. ➤







◀ **COLONIAL DOLLHOUSE**, designed, built, and furnished by eighth graders, Smiley Junior High, Denver, Colo., makes a super gift for children's hospital.



**FAVORS** for hospitals are proudly wrapped by second graders at Noriega Home School, San Francisco, Calif., with their own special finger-painted and block-printed paper. ▼



# Ideas



**STOCKING TREE** is decked with 292 pairs of new socks to be sent to Hungarian refugee children by Clay School JRCers, Toledo, Ohio. ➤



# JUDITH LIGHTS A

Hanukkah story by KATHERINE B. SHIPPEN

*Illustrated by Harve Stein*

"IT TAKES A LONG TIME," Judith said. "It takes a long time, and a lot of scraping."

She was sitting on a high stool before the well-scrubbed kitchen table in her grandmother's house, grating potatoes for the Hanukkah pancakes. Across the table Judith's grandmother was grating potatoes too. They scraped the potatoes into soft white mounds and dumped them into a brown bowl that stood on the table between them.

"We've got to make a lot," Judith said, scraping her potato up and down. "We've got to have plenty of pancakes for Hanukkah."

The grandmother picked out a big potato and held it for a moment in her strong hand.

"I wonder how many Hanukkah pancakes I've made in my lifetime," she said. "And my grandmother before me, and her grandmother before her—back in Poland, you know—back and back, hundreds of years."

"How many years?" Judith asked.

Her grandmother did not answer. She seemed to be lost in vast problems of arithmetic.

"Tell me about Hanukkah," Judith said after a while. She had heard the story many times before, perhaps that was why she wanted it told again.

"It must have been two thousand years ago," the grandmother began. For she liked the old story as well as Judith. "That was even before our people came to Poland.

"A wicked Greek king, named Antiochus, ruled Palestine then, and he wanted all the Jews to worship Greek gods—" She gave her potato a hard scrape against the grater. "He wanted to tear up the books of the law and

to put the Greek gods in our temples, and to sacrifice unclean animals. When our people would not do it, he had them killed. What could they do?"

"What *could* they do?" Judith wondered. But her grandmother went on:

"There was an old man in Jerusalem! He must have been older than I am now. He told the people to leave Jerusalem. 'Come up into the hills,' he said. 'We'll live in the wilderness rather than stay here and worship gods we don't believe in.'

"The people followed Mattathias. Every Jew in Jerusalem left the city and went up into the hills. And they slept on the bare ground and ate whatever they could find. It was better than living under the Greek king.

"But they were homesick living that way. People like their own houses, and they like their own things. And they kept wondering what had happened to the beautiful temple in Jerusalem.

"Still they stayed on in the wilderness. Then, one day, Mattathias died. Judah was Mattathias' oldest son. People called him the Maccabee because he was so strong.

"'We have waited long enough,' Judah Maccabee said now. 'Let us fight for what belongs to us.'

"He knew that Antiochus had horses and chariots and elephants, and thousands of fighting men. But this did not hinder Judah Maccabee. They say that he went *cheerfully* into battle, though I do not see how that could be.

"Soon blood was soaking into the field outside the city and many men were dead.

# CANDLE

As Grandmother told the Hanukkah story, the heroes of olden days seemed to come alive for Judith.



But Judah did not lose courage. He triumphed and the forces of Antiochus ran away.

"And tired and covered with the dust of battle, his men marched into Jerusalem through the city gates.

"They ran at once to the temple to see what had happened there. They found the courtyard, which had been planted with flowers and shrubs, was all trampled down and neglected. The lovely doors of carved bronze had been beaten in, and hung down, crooked, and loose on their hinges. The marble floors of the temple were thick with dust, and flies buzzed about the sacrificial altar that had been stained with the blood of unclean beasts.

"So now those men, who were exhausted with the effort of their fight, did not delay but set about to clean that temple and put it all in order again. And they scrubbed whatever they could scrub with soap and water. They tried to scrub the dirty altar stone but the stains would not come off.

"So they carried the heavy stone altar out and threw it away. And they brought in a smooth stone to make a new altar."

Judith paused in her scraping to hear what would happen now, and her grandmother went on:

"And when all this was done they found a little battered lamp that had been thrown

on a heap of rubble outside the door. It was made of copper, and they polished it and they polished it, till it shone. But now they hadn't any oil for the lamp. You can't burn just any kind of oil in the temple lamp. You have to burn a special oil that has been consecrated by the high priest. And they hadn't any . . . Of what use is a lamp without oil?

"At last they did find a tiny flask of oil. It had been consecrated and sealed in a little glass bottle. It was just enough to burn for one day.

" 'Let's light it anyway,' Judah said. 'Better one day than nothing at all.'

"And that was the miracle—the Hanukkah miracle. The tiny flask of oil, just big enough to burn for one day, kept burning for eight days and eight nights in the temple."

The grandmother's voice stopped and the room was still. Judith climbed down from her stool. The potatoes were all grated. There were a great many other things to do before the Hanukkah party started.

It was a big party really, considering that the grandmother's house was quite small. All Judith's brothers and sisters were there; and her mother and father and her aunts and uncles and her cousins; and the children who lived next door. You should have heard how noisy it was with children spinning tops in one corner, and everybody talking and laughing and exclaiming over the presents that the grandmother had prepared for them. Every one of the children was given some bright new pennies. "Hanukkah gold," their grandmother called them.

And all the time these things were going on, Judith kept thinking about the temple in Jerusalem—and she wished she could have been there to help to set it straight.

When they all sat down to eat their potato pancakes and their ice cream and cake, the room seemed quieter.

"I ate eight," Judith heard her little brother saying proudly. But she was think-

ing, "That cruse of oil burned eight days and eight nights. It must have been pretty burning there in the temple."

It was nearly dark when the great plate of pancakes was finally finished and all the ice cream was gone.

"We can light the candles when the first stars come out," Judith's grandmother said.

The Menorah, or eight-branched candlestick was standing on the window sill. It was very old and many candles had been lighted in it before now, for it had been brought from Poland long ago.

Judith's grandfather lighted the first candle and Judith heard him say the soft Hebrew words that mean:

"Blessed art thou, O Lord our God, King of the Universe, who hast sanctified us by thy commandments and commanded us to kindle the lights of Hanukkah—"

Then, one after another, the candles were lighted, and with every candle the same blessing was said. And Judith was permitted to light one of them. Her hand trembled a little as she touched the wick with light.

"How Judah had to fight to keep the temple flame burning," she was saying to herself. . . . "Blessed art thou, O Lord our God, King of the Universe. . . ."

Then, when the flames of the Menorah were all burning so that their gold light seemed to shine through the room on all the people there, they joined hands and began to sing an old Hebrew hymn. They sang it softly at first, then louder and louder until the sound seemed to fill the room.

"O give thanks to the Lord for He is good," they sang. "Because His mercy endureth forever."

And Judith held tight to her grandmother's hand and listened. Then she too joined with the others and sang.

"Judah Maccabee had to fight hard to keep the temple lights burning," she thought. "Now I have lighted a candle, too." (THE END)



# ★ THANK YOU VERY MUCH

Holiday time is thank-you time for juniors and their friends.



**YOU WERE SO GENEROUS**, say 3rd graders of Crespi Home School, San Francisco, Calif., to far-off friends in Pago Pago, American Samoa, as they unpack boxes of handmade gifts from there. ➤



Romaine-Skelton photo

**THANK YOU**, says "Grandmother" Foret, resident of old folks home, New Orleans, La., to students of Shaw School for coming to see her and bringing her a magazine. ▼



▲ **THANK YOU, THANK YOU**, say Betty Jo and Ann Louise for the gifts sent to them and their friends at the Dixon, Ill., State School by JRC members in 25 Northern Illinois chapters.

# Christmas Without

"**W**ILL JOLLY KRISS KRINGLE visit us here in Plymouth Colony on Christmas Eve?" Remember asked at supper. "Just as he did when we were in Holland? Will the good saint fill our shoes with sweetmeats and presents as he did there?"

Her brother Bartholomew looked up eagerly from his bowl of Indian meal mush to hear the answer. He, too, remembered the merry Dutch Christmases before the Pilgrims had set sail in the Mayflower for America. But their father shook his head.

"Methinks not, children," Master Allerton replied soberly. "There are no sweetmeats to be had here in Massachusetts, as you well know. And no shops where presents may be bought. Besides, we Pilgrims think the Dutch ways too frivolous for pious folk. Governor Bradford has decreed that Christmas shall be a work day this year, like any other day. Plymouth Colony needs the work of many hands more than it needs pleasuring. He and the town fathers would frown upon any notion of Kriss Kringle."

"Come now," their mother chided the children, seeing Remember's trembling chin and Bartholomew's downcast eyes. "Surely we need no sweetmeats and toys to remind us of our blessings. This second Christmas in Plymouth there is cornmeal and fish enough for all. We are well and strong. The Indians are our friends who have taught us much about this new land."

She ladled bright red cranberry sauce onto the children's mush.

"Come now! Taste this treat and be of good cheer. These cranberries may be our last fruit before winter snows cover the bogs."

"Methinks I might like them better," their father said with a wry face, "had they a bit of sweetening to take away the sharpness."



"You and your sweet-tooth!" Mistress Allerton laughed at him. "Well we know you cannot swallow a bite of food that is sour."

When she smiled the children's mother was pretty as any maid. The children loved to see her happy. But even her merriment could not persuade Bartholomew and Remember to smile on this night. To have to give up Kriss Kringle and his presents seemed too much to bear, even for earnest Pilgrim children.

Next morning it was their task to gather clams on the rocky beach. This was a pleasant chore even in winter when the cold water of low tide made their bare feet numb.

Suddenly a strange kind of gull flew overhead. It sailed gracefully to a landing and ran along the water's edge with long legs and lightning speed. Bartholomew dropped the wooden clam bucket and chased the bird.

# Kriss Kringle

A story of Plymouth Colony  
by HELEN REEDER CROSS



**Remember watched as her brother  
chased the gull along the beach.**

But before he had run many steps he stopped in his tracks and began picking clams again. The light in his face faded.

"Nothing so tempts me to waste precious time as a bird," he said sadly.

"Surely you could spend a moment with your new kind of gull!" Remember protested. She knew that of all things in the world Bartholomew loved birds best. He felt about birds as she had felt about her little Dutch doll which had dropped overboard from the Mayflower and been lost in the sea. But there was no time for bird lore or for dolls in Plymouth Colony. Here Bartholomew must do a man's work each day; Remember, a woman's. Such work lasted from dawn to sundown with no time left over for tracking bird nests or playing with a Dutch doll.

To take their thoughts from their disappointments Remember began to speak of that last gay Christmas in Holland.

"Do you remember the ribbon I bought for Mother with five copper pennies?" she asked her brother. "It was of red satin. How gay and pretty she looked with it tied beneath the collar of her Sabbath dress on Christmas morning!"

"I gave Father a sweet Dutch coffee cake that Christmas," Bartholomew said thoughtfully. "I ran errands for the baker to pay for

it. Do you remember how the cake oozed with raisins and was frosted with sugar?"

The children's mouths watered just to think of so much sweetness. But both knew their father with his "sweet-tooth" missed sugar even more than they.

Suddenly Remember had an idea.

"True, there are no shops in Plymouth. But could we not think of some gifts not bought with money to bring joy to Mother and Father this Christmastime? Surely it is not wrong to give happiness to others on the birthday of the Christ Child."

"That's a fine idea!" Bartholomew agreed. "We must put on our thinking caps."

But ideas were slow in coming, though the children thought and thought.

Two days before Christmas the winter snows had not yet begun. Mistress Allerton sent Remember to the cranberry bog again to pick the bright, sour berries. As she worked all alone in the marsh, the pale winter sunshine warmed her back. Even the long-legged cranes (who had given the berries their name) no longer picked their way daintily about in the shallow water, fishing for a dinner. They had long ago flown south for the winter.

Remember fell to day-dreaming about past Christmases. She thought again of the red ribbon that had put color into her mother's cheeks and gaiety into her smile. For Mistress Allerton was not solemn and serious by nature, as were most Pilgrims. Remember knew that she saw no sin in beauty or color, as did the town fathers.

"God Himself must love bright colors," she often said when she and Remember went berrying together in the summertime. "Look about you, child, at the birds and flowers. He does not dress them all alike in gray."

Suddenly a thought struck Remember. >

"Why, I do not need a shop to buy a bit of brightness for Mother. I can string these cranberries into a necklace for her. They will be a pretty Christmas gift indeed."

So that afternoon when she should have studied her alphabet and worked at her ciphering, Remember sat stringing cranberries on a long woolen thread. Even the thread she had spun herself on the spinning wheel beside the hearth. When finished, the necklace was as pretty as any string of beads penies might have bought in Holland.

That night Bartholomew, too, sat through supper with a secret smile lighting his face. He had spent the day in the forest, gathering beechnuts for the winter. As Remember set away the pewter plates on their shelf he whispered to her, "I found a fine Christmas gift for Father in the forest. High in the air it was!"

"What would Father want with a bird's nest?" Remember teased him, hoping he might tell her what it really was.

"Nay, a nest it is not, but more I shall not tell you. Wait 'till Christmas Eve."

"Then you must wait to hear of my present for Mother, too," Remember retorted. But though she pouted a bit, she didn't really mind. Somehow, with secrets to keep, it began to seem more like Christmas in Holland. The very air had crackled with them there.

Even the grown-ups acted a little strange. They whispered together before the fire long after Remember and Bartholomew should have been asleep on their cornhusk mattresses. Next day when Remember came into the cabin quietly on her Indian moccasins, Mistress Allerton jumped nearly from her skin and hid something quickly under her apron.

Christmas Eve came at last with a special supper of wild turkey stuffed with beechnuts and a squirrel stew besides. Master Allerton had had good fortune on his last fowling trip.

Smiling a secret smile at Bartholomew, Remember stepped quietly behind her mother's stool. From there she slipped the string of bright red cranberries over her neck.

"Why, child!" Mistress Allerton exclaimed with delight. "What have we here? A Christ-

**Remember slipped the necklace around her mother's neck.**



*Illustrated by  
Sidney Quinn*



mas gift made by your own sweet hands, is it?" There were tears in her eyes, but Remember knew they were happy tears.

"'Tis better than a string of beads from a shop," Remember explained. "When these shrivel or break I can string another." The color of the necklace made her mother's cheeks pink and her eyes sparkle. How glad she was to have thought of a craneberry necklace to brighten her mother's somber gray dress.

Then it was Bartholomew's turn. Looking very mysterious, he pulled a wooden bucket from under the table and set it in front of Master Allerton.

"I have a gift for you, too, Father," he told him, "if you will but close your eyes and open your mouth wide."

He touched a spoon dipped from the bucket to his father's lips. At the taste, Master Allerton's eyes popped open and a wide smile spread over his face.

"'Tis honey!" he exclaimed. "Where did you find it?" he asked in amazement, for honey was seldom found in Massachusetts.

"In a bee tree in the forest when I gathered nuts," Bartholomew told him happily. "I was really looking for an eagle's nest," he admitted. "But now there will be something, Father, to please your sweet-tooth."

Their father and mother gave each other a secret look.

"All the surprises are not yet over," Mistress Allerton said. She pulled something from under her bed and gave it to Remember. It was a corn-cob doll, painstakingly fashioned in her few spare moments. Its corn-cob face looked very real. Under its knitted gray cape (like Remember's own) it wore a red dress.

"Oh, Mother!" Remember cried. "I have longed for a doll like the one I used to have in Holland. Though Bartholomew thought it unseemly for such a big girl as I."

"No one ever outgrows happiness, my child," Mistress Allerton told her. "And a

bit of dress dyed red from beet juice is not sinful, methinks, but something to feast the eyes and heart upon."

"'Tis time someone else be surprised," their father said. He pulled from behind the door three long, queer-shaped vegetables such as none had seen before. They were brown, yellow, and orange in color—hard and smooth to the touch.

"What could they be for?" Bartholomew asked in wonder, feeling the long twisted necks.

"I traded them with an Indian for a pair of English boots," Master Allerton told them. "Indians call them gourds. They hollow them out with a sharp knife and hang them near their tepees. When spring comes the birds build their nests inside the gourds. Methought did we but tempt the birds to live nearby, you might study them more easily. Besides, their morning song would please our ears."

"Oh, Father!" Bartholomew cried in delight. "Such a fine gift! Better by far than any silly toy Kriss Kringle ever left me in Holland."

"We didn't need Kriss Kringle to make our Christmas happy, did we?" Remember asked that night as she kissed her mother good-night and hugged her new corn-cob doll.

"Nor the Dutch shops, either," her mother replied. "Gifts fashioned with loving hands are better far than money can buy."

"Would the town fathers be displeased if they knew of our presents to each other?" Bartholomew asked anxiously. For though it was not easy, both he and Remember wished to be good Pilgrim children. They had crossed the ocean with their parents that they might worship God freely and earnestly.

"Nay," Master Allerton told them, smiling at the children's worried faces. "Methinks the Christ Child Himself would be pleased with this kind of Christmas. When each has thought only of giving happiness to another."



# Legends of Christmas Greens and Flowers

By RUBY LEE ADAMS

Illustrated by Tim Evans

OUT OF THE distant past comes a familiar greeting that warms the heart of mankind—Merry Christmas! It stirs the heart like some beautiful old memory, and echoes back across the years when the English first shouted it from their windows to their neighbors and friends on Christmas morning. Legend tells us that the beehives were decorated with holly in Old England as a way of saying “Merry Christmas” to the bees.

Flowers, too, are a part of our Christmas customs and legends of the world, for they have brought people of all nations closer together. Flowers are ambassadors of goodwill and cheerfulness; they have traveled back and forth across the oceans of the earth and created a “One World” in their kingdom, long before man ever gave it a thought.

## The Mistletoe

Our Christmas tradition of “the kiss under the mistletoe” goes back to the ancient Druids of England. The mistletoe was once regarded as a symbol of special privilege. A Norse legend that links the custom of kissing with the mistletoe tells that Hodur killed Balder with an arrow made of mistletoe.

When the death-dealing arrow was plucked from the wound, the mistletoe was given to Freya, goddess of love, since which time she gives a kiss to all who stroll beneath it.

A tiny bit of mistletoe in the invitation to a Christmas dinner or party is said to have begun in Colonial days. It is meant as a wish for happiness and prosperity throughout the coming year.



The poinsettia, the universal American Christmas plant, is called the "flower of the Holy Night" in Mexico, its native land. The legend is that a little child knelt outside the church weeping because she had no gifts for the Christ Child's birthday. And as she knelt a scarlet blossom sprang from the ground beside her—a fitting gift to lay before the Christmas manger.

The poinsettia was brought to the United States by Dr. Joel Roberts Poinsett, from whom it received its name. In 1829, after 4 years of service in Mexico as minister from the United States, Dr. Poinsett transplanted this beautiful Christmas flower in the gardens of his home at Charleston, S. C. The poinsettia is the Christmas flaming star which seems to be a symbol of the Star of Bethlehem.



The bay tree, with its purple berries and lancelike leaves, is said to have sheltered the holy family during a thunderstorm. Accordingly it was believed that lightning would

never strike a bay tree, and its branches were carried into the homes at Christmastime as a protection against misfortune.



It is fitting that the rose has its place in the custom of beautifying our Christmas celebrations. It is so stately and cheerful that even its thorns command respect. This "Queen of Flowers" grew wild throughout the world. An interesting legend of the Christmas rose is woven around the little shepherd girl of Bethlehem who had no gift for the infant Savior. But there suddenly appeared before her an angel who scattered beautiful white roses in her pathway, and the child gathered them in her arms and laid them at the manger as her gift to the Christ Child.



Holly was used in the celebration of holidays as early as the Roman Saturnalia; and the Romans used it to send their friends as a token of goodwill. Popular belief ascribed to it the power to repel lightning, to cause water to freeze, and to cast a spell over animals. It was even believed that the holly used at Christmas cast a spell over animals and caused cattle to kneel in their stalls on Christmas eve.

The holly wreath appears to represent the crown of thorns which Christ wore on the Cross, and the little red berries symbolize the drops of blood. So the holly has a Christmas message all its own.

(THE END)

# MOUSSALI - AFRICAN BOY ARTIST

*Illustrated by Fred Collins*

A true story of a 12-year-old African boy whom the author, CHARLIE MAY SIMON, met when she was on a visit to Dr. Albert Schweitzer's hospital at Lambaréné.

IN ALL HIS TWELVE YEARS, Moussali had never heard there were such things as Christmas cards until he made some for me. He had not even known that there were other people in the world who liked to make drawings of

the things they saw about them, as he did, until about 5 years ago when he left his remote little village in the jungles of Africa.

His father had been taken sick with a tropical disease which the witch doctor, with all his magic spells and charms, could not cure. It was a lucky day in Moussali's life when the father was brought by carriers and canoe to Dr. Schweitzer's Hospital on the



Moussali works on drawings for the author's Christmas cards.



Ogowe River. Moussali, with his mother and two sisters, came with him, as is the custom of the people. And when the father was cured, and stayed on to work as an orderly in the Hospital, he kept his family with him. There was a Mission School across the river, where Moussali learned to read and write, though in a language not his own, and he learned of a bigger world than he had ever dreamed of.

It was during a recent visit to Dr. Schweitzer's Hospital that I met Moussali. I had brought little gifts for the leper children, such as toy balloons, picture books, harmonicas, balls, and a box of colored pencils.

"One of our orderlies has a son who likes to draw," Mlle. Emma said when I showed the gifts to her. "Why don't we put these colored pencils aside for him?"

She promised to tell him about them the next time she saw him. That very evening, just as the sun was setting, he came to my room at the guest house. I saw Moussali walking slowly up the footpath past the long, low hospital buildings. Now and then he paused as if trying to make up his mind whether to turn around and go back or not. Then he started on again, his red-orange shirt moving like a flame against his dark brown skin. He walked in the typical way of African natives, flat-footed, yet graceful, with chin held high and shoulders erect, that comes from balancing loads on the head.

I opened the door when he approached, but he stayed outside and would not venture in. Without a word he handed me a note. It was from Mlle. Emma: "This is the little artist I told you about."

"Come in," I urged, and when he did I quickly closed the door behind him, for the mosquitoes were beginning to swarm before the coming rain.

Moussali was painfully shy on that first meeting. I think he would have rushed off then and there, as soon as he had the pencils

**All JRCers are interested in Dr. Schweitzer because of the gifts amounting to \$10,000 which they have given him for the purchase of rice for his hospital in Lambaréné, French Equatorial Africa. The money was given from the American Red Cross Children's Fund.**

in his hand, if the rain had not started coming down in full force.

"You can't go out in this," I said. "Why not wait here until it slackens."

I pulled a chair up closer to the light and he sat uncomfortably on the very edge, with the box of pencils clutched in his hands. His dark eyes glanced about the room until they came to rest on a small calendar on my table. It was turned to the month of November. The cover, with a spray of flowers painted in Florentine design, held Moussali's interest rather than the time of year. His glance moved from the picture to the box of colored pencils, and when he took one out I saw a puzzled expression come over his face.

"This is the way it works," I said.

I showed him how to turn the top so the lead would come down. And I made some marks on a piece of paper to try it out, then gave it back to Moussali. The pencil had green lead, and instead of making the meaningless lines that I had made, he drew a palm branch drooping gracefully. It was then that the idea for Christmas cards came to me.

"In my country, at this time of the year, we send cards to those we are fond of," I said. "They are cards with a message of greeting and a picture of flowers or a tree, or perhaps a mother and child. Do you think you could draw something like that for me?"

Moussali's dark, expressive eyes gave me his answer. I tore off a few sheets of blue writing paper from a tablet, and told him to use them for the first drawings.

"We don't have school on Thursday, I'll bring you the pictures then," he said, speaking for the first time.

It was at sunset the following Thursday

that he came again, bringing five drawings on the writing paper I had given him. I had had in mind something decorative only, a palm branch such as he had drawn to test the pencil, or a flower design like the one on the calendar. But Moussali had drawn five different pictures of a native mother and child, each in a different pose. They were truly African, with gay printed cloth wrapped in graceful folds about them, such as men and women alike wear in Africa, and colored handkerchiefs on their heads.

One was pounding manioc root, with her

"Are there people in your country that make pictures like I do?"

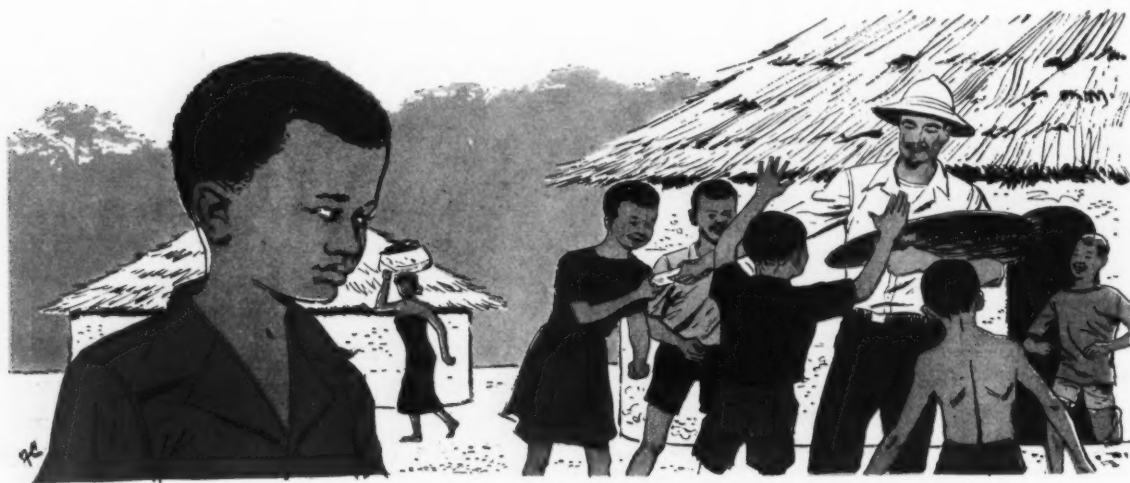
"Not just like yours, perhaps, but there are many artists, and there are schools that teach nothing else but drawing and painting and making things of stone and clay."

I asked him when he first began to draw.

"When I was still nursing at my mother's breast," he answered.

This could mean up to 3 years old, in this land of the tsetse fly where there are no cows or milk goats.

"What did you draw with?" I asked.



Moussali watched the other children gathering around the artist.

child fastened snugly on her back, one looked down tenderly as her child was eating from a wooden bowl, one simply held hers in her arms, one had hers between her knees as she sat to paddle a canoe, and one was putting her baby to sleep in a wooden packing box.

I was amazed that a boy his age could draw so well, with such a sense of form and design. And more amazing still was the fact that he had little chance to see any pictures other than the ones he himself had made, and no instruction whatever.

"They're good!" I exclaimed.

"Do you like the pictures I make?" Moussali asked, pleased as any artist at my praise.

"I like them very much," I answered.

"With a sharp rock, in the mud on the floor and walls of our hut," Moussali answered.

A French artist was visiting the Hospital at the time of Moussali's arrival about 5 years ago, and he saw for the first time that there were others who liked to make pictures of what they saw.

"All the children crowded around him and followed him wherever he went," Moussali said.

He told of how the artist had squeezed out colors on little scraps of paper and gave to Moussali and the other children to play with. Moussali took his quietly home to experiment alone.

"There are many other drawings I'd like,"

I said, not daring to tell just how many. "Would it be easier for you if you come to my room and draw them?"

"Yes," Moussali answered. "I could come on Sunday after Mass is over."

I bought some cardboard letter folders at the trading store at Lambaréné, and cut out more than a hundred cards of the right size for mailing in a standard envelope.

"Do you want drawings on all of those?" Moussali asked in consternation when he saw the pile of cards the following Sunday.

"Just draw as many as you have time to do," I answered. "And besides, why not have the same picture on all? Something simple like the palm branch you made the first time you came here."

"Palm branches are painful to draw," Moussali said.

"Then draw a small flower or perhaps a butterfly. There are such beautiful ones here in Africa. And when you're through I'll pay you what I would have paid for Christmas cards at home."

The sum I offered was more than any grown man in his village could have earned in months of work, but that was far in the future, with the cards looming like a mountain before him.

I cleared the bedside table and set it a little apart from the table where I was writing, so he could draw without a feeling of being watched. He began with a butterfly, drawing one after another, all different.

"Butterflies are painful to draw," he said at last. "Can't I draw something else?"

"Of course. Draw whatever you like."

He drew the lamp on my table, a book, a sick man on a hospital bed, a hoe, an axe.

"I plan to write a message on each one," I said. "A wish for happiness, for Christmas is the best holiday of the year for us."

"Then I'll draw happy things," he said.

He drew boys swimming in the river, a man beside the bank fishing with a bamboo

pole, and another dragging in a net. And he drew a lone fish below the water's surface.

Moussali still came often to visit me even after all the drawings were finished. His box of colored pencils was kept in the pocket of his red-orange shirt.

The other children of the workers were always running up to me with smiles and greetings of "Bole, Madame," as friendly as little puppies. But Moussali's shyness showed a sensitivity and a perception unusual for a boy his age anywhere. He was curious about the amazing world outside of Africa.

Were there flowers in my country, he wanted to know? And did we have rivers with crocodiles and hippopotamuses like the Ogowe? What kind of houses did we have?

As he learned about my country, I also had brief glimpses into the heart of Africa, though not in words so much as in his drawings. He had a way of closing doors against me if I questioned him too closely.

"It is forbidden me to tell," he'd lower his eyes as he gave me the answer.

He hesitated to tell me any of the stories of long ago that the old men of the village tell under the kapok tree. But he made a drawing of men gathered in a palaver house, with a chief making a talk, gesturing with a palm branch in his hand.

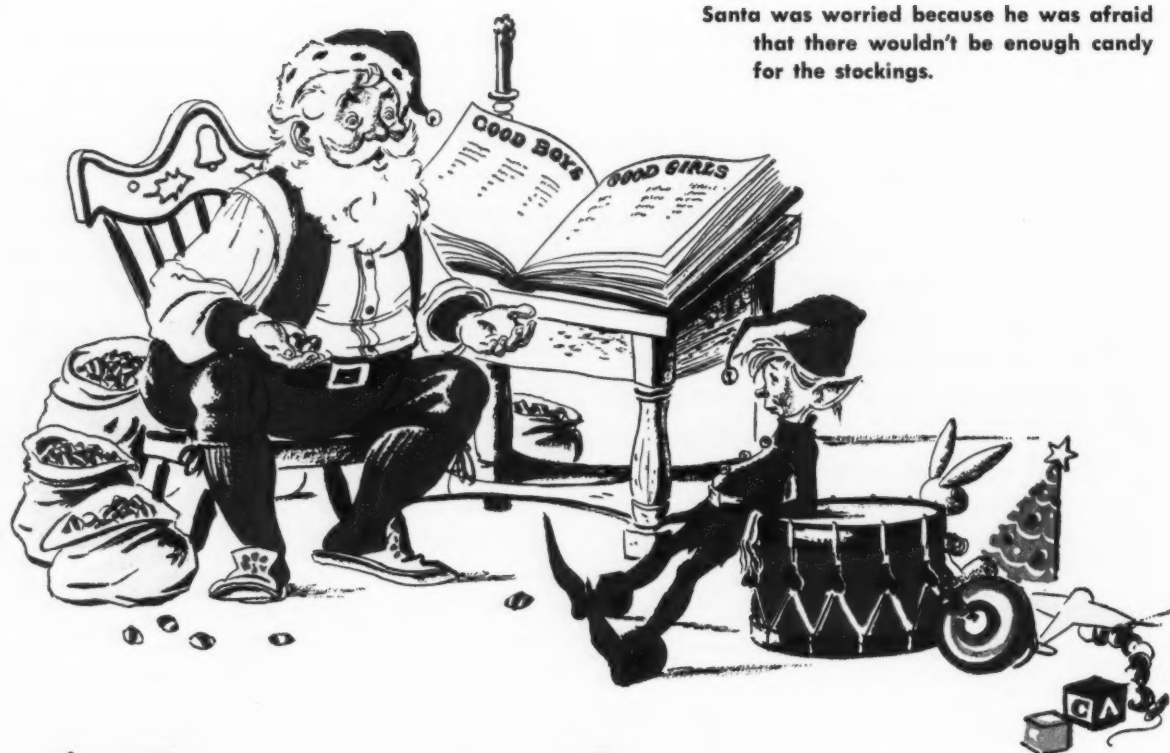
There was in Moussali that same contradiction which is a symbol of all of Africa, a gradual awakening to a new age, and yet at the same time, a clinging to old beliefs and superstitions that are too deeply a part of him to be thrown off lightly.

After my return to America I received a letter from him saying that he prayed for my return every time he went to the Mission services. And he added that there was a fetish living not too far away that was very powerful. He could perform magic even on those he did not know.

"It is because I miss you that I saw him," Moussali added.

(THE END)

Santa was worried because he was afraid that there wouldn't be enough candy for the stockings.



# A Surprise for Santa

By RUTH EVERDING LIBBY

Illustrated by William Hutchinson

**T**HE LITTLEST ELF was worried. He was worried because Santa was worried. And Santa was worried because he was afraid that there wouldn't be enough candy for the children's stockings on Christmas morning.

"I guess I'll have to put nuts in many of the stockings instead of candy this year," sighed Santa.

"But the children like candy so much better. Especially the red and white striped peppermint candy. It is their favorite of all the hard candies," said the Littlest Elf.

"I know. I know!" sighed Santa again. "All the elves are working overtime as it is. Measuring sugar. Cooking and stirring the bubbly candy. Pouring it out to cool. Pulling it. Then the biggest job of all is cutting it into little short pieces. That is what takes up so much valuable time."

"How many pieces do you put in each stocking?" asked the Littlest Elf.

"That all depends on the size of the stocking," answered Santa as they walked over to a long l-o-n-g table.

Santa and the Littlest Elf watched the candy-making elves snip, snip, snip short pieces from the long l-o-n-g strands of the cooling red and white peppermint candy.

"You didn't tell me how many pieces you use in each stocking," said the Littlest Elf.

"Well, I'd say about ten pieces in the smaller stockings and perhaps twelve in the larger ones," answered Santa thoughtfully, as he stroked his silky white beard.

"Maybe Mrs. Santa could help out by making a lot of those cute animal cookies that she makes for us elves when we are extra, EXTRA good," suggested the Littlest Elf. "The children would love them."

"No, that wouldn't do," said Santa. "The cookies would break in the stockings. Chil-



dren wouldn't like crumbled cookies, they wouldn't be able to tell a lion from an elephant cookie. And anyway the mothers wouldn't like crumbs scattered on the rugs."

When Santa went outdoors to feed his reindeer, the Littlest Elf wandered around in the candy kitchen. He asked one elf, wearing a red apron, if he needed help in measuring the sugar. But the elf told him he was too little to lift the heavy sacks of sugar.

The Littlest Elf went over to watch a big pot of hot bubbly candy. "Oh, may I help you stir the candy?" he asked an elf wearing a white candy-spattered apron.

"No," said the elf. "You're too little. You couldn't stir fast enough. You'd only slow me down."

The elves wearing green aprons were the candy-pullers. The Littlest Elf asked one if he couldn't take a turn and pull one end of the candy. The elf smiled as he pulled and p-u-l-l-e-d until the candy stretched out like a long l-o-n-g rope. "You have to be very strong to be a candy-puller. And you are such a little elf."

The Littlest Elf watched the candy-pullers as they carefully placed the long rope of warm candy on the long table. "My, but it would be fun to jump rope with a red and white candy rope," he chuckled to himself. Of course, he knew everyone was too busy for such foolishness. And he felt pretty sure that a candy rope would only get brittle and break when it got cold.

The Littlest Elf looked at his hands. They were shiny clean. He took hold of one end of the candy rope and slowly bent it. "It looks like a big hook. No, it looks more like a cane," he said to himself. Then he had a WONDERFUL idea! He picked up a shiny pair of scissors and snipped off a cane just big enough for him.

**The Littlest Elf was ready  
with his surprise for Santa.**

As Santa came stomping up the steps, the Littlest Elf ran to the door to meet him. "Oh, Santa, come quick! Come and see what I have made. Do you know what it is?" he asked.

"Why if it isn't a peppermint candy cane," boomed Santa. "But what do you propose to do with it?"

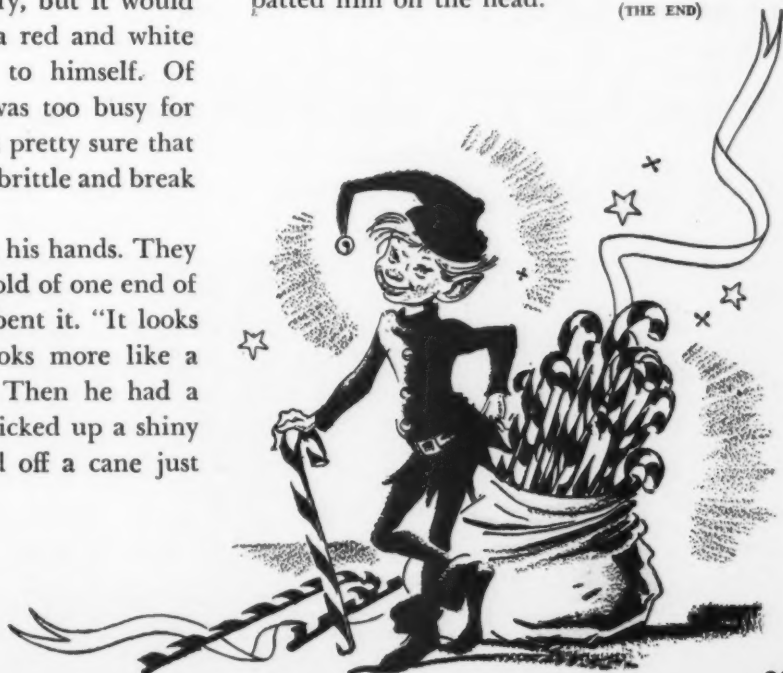
"Now you can put a candy cane in each child's stocking," said the Littlest Elf. "Instead of ten pieces of candy in a little stocking you'll leave a small candy cane like this one. And a bigger one instead of twelve pieces of candy in a bigger stocking. Think of all the time it will save in snip, snipping candy."

"Littlest Elf, you may be little but you have come up with a BIG idea," smiled Santa, as he slowly bent a hooked handle for another candy cane. "Your wonderful idea will save hours and hours of cutting time. And I have a feeling that children the world over are going to like one peppermint candy cane much better than a lot of little candies."

"Well, I am glad that your candy worries are over," said the Littlest Elf happily.

"Yes, thanks to you, Littlest Elf, for your wonderful idea," said Santa, as he lovingly patted him on the head.

(THE END)



# AT CHRISTMAS — AT CHRISTMAS

*make it safe for all of you*



hen trimming the



hang the colored



and



out

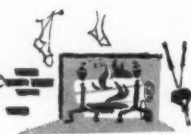
of reach so little brother and sister can't get hurt on them. Set the tree in a bucket of damp sand so it won't dry out and catch fire.

A holly



when it dries becomes a fire hazard. Hang it where it will look

pretty, but keep it away from the



WATCH  
YOUR STEP



carefully

and hold the hand-rail as you ride. Always face the door, if you use an



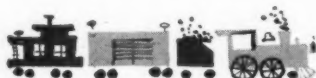
For the baby in your family buy a soft



which he can cuddle,

and never anything smaller than his little

If Santa brings you a



set it up where no one will fall

over it. Never put it around the tree. Be sure your hands are dry whenever you touch it so the electricity won't give you a shock.

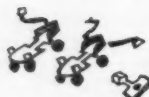
If Santa leaves



under the tree for you, or perhaps a



or



or a bright, shiny new



, ask someone who knows to show you

how to use them safely.

Rebus by JEAN NOWAK—Illustrations by JOHN DONALDSON

**HAVE A MERRY AND SAFE CHRISTMAS!**

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# Menin Jesu

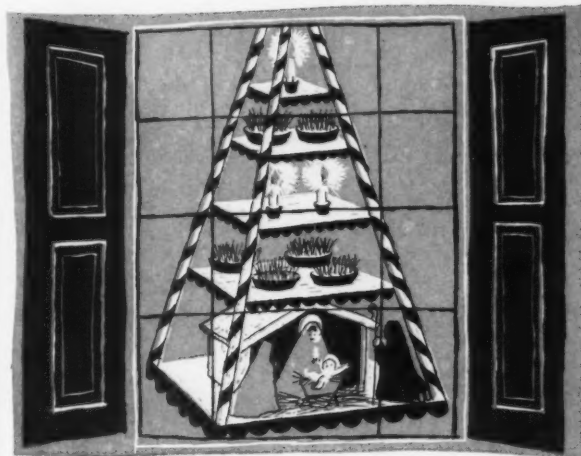
Christine K. Simmons tells the story  
of her song on the back cover.

EARLY PORTUGUESE settlers on Cape Cod, in Massachusetts, brought with them to the New World a Christmas custom they called, "Menin Jesu." Instead of a tree, they placed in a corner of their home a pyramid of shelves. On the shelves were arranged candles and growing wheat, and often a Bethlehem scene, too.

In the early days each Portuguese family kept open house from Christmas until New Year's Day. Candles burned in every window to welcome the guests. Strangers were the most welcome visitors of all.

Through the lighted windows, the callers could see the Menin Jesu inside. On the top shelf, the smallest, one candle burned brightly. The next shelf, which was a little larger, held two saucers of sprouted wheat. Below on the next shelf were two lighted candles, and on the fourth shelf, wheat growing in four saucers. The candles were to remind the family and visitors of the light that Jesus brought into the world. The growing wheat was a reminder of the everlasting life we have through him.

On the bottom shelf of the Menin Jesu was arranged a manger scene.



## MENIN JESU, LITTLE JESUS

*Menin Jesu, little Jesus,  
See we light our candles bright;  
Put them in the chimney corner,  
There to make your birthday bright.*

*Menin Jesu, little Jesus,  
Menin Jesu, see our light.*

*Menin Jesu, little Jesus,  
See our dish of sprouting wheat;  
Growing there in soil and water,  
So we give you bread to eat.*

*Menin Jesu, little Jesus,  
Menin Jesu, come and eat.*

*Menin Jesu, little Jesus,  
Growing wheat and candles bright;  
Make our Menin Jesu corner,  
Ready here for you this night.*

*Menin Jesu, little Jesus,  
Menin Jesu, born this night.*



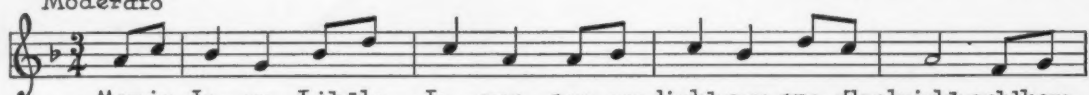
Illustrated by D. Wilson

# Menin Jesu

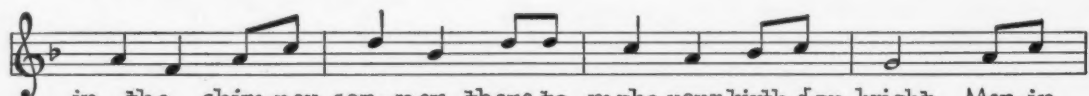
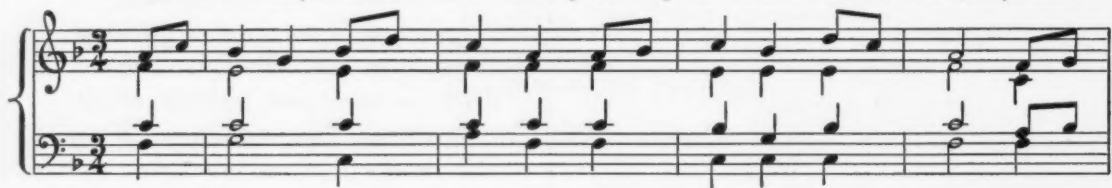
(Little Jesus)

Words and Music by Christine K. Simmons  
Arranged by James E. Stark

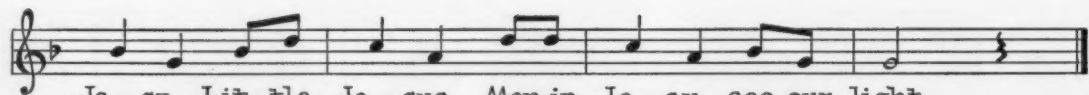
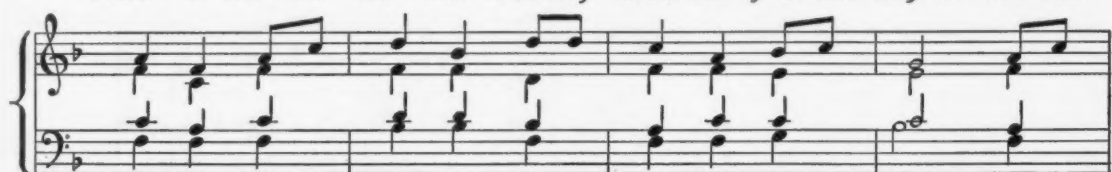
Moderato



Men-in Je - su, Lit-tle Je - sus, see we light our can-dles bright; put them  
Men-in Je - su, Lit-tle Je - sus, see our dish of sprout-ing wheat; grow-ing  
Men-in Je - su, Lit-tle Je - sus, grow-ing wheat and can-dles bright; make our



in the chim-ney cor-ner, there to make your birth-day bright. Men-in  
there in soil and wa-ter, so we give you bread to eat. Men-in  
Men-in Je - su cor-ner rea-dy here for you this night. Men-in



Je - su, Lit-tle Je - sus, Men-in Je - su see our light.  
Je - su, Lit-tle Je - sus, Men-in Je - su come and eat.  
Je - su, Lit-tle Je - sus, Men-in Je - su born this night.



Illustrated by Jo F. Irwin



